

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE



**Jared Huffman**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
6<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

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ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
35<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

April 13, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary, Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar,

As Members of the California State Legislature, we would first like to thank you for holding a regional meeting to discuss the proposed 5-Year Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program in San Francisco.

As you may remember, two years ago the Cosco Busan freighter spilled a relatively modest amount of oil, 58,000 gallons, into San Francisco Bay causing significant damage to fish, birds and other animals and leading an important fishery to be closed for weeks. The memory of this spill is still vivid; some of us can still remember the 1969 Santa Barbara spill that helped start the modern day environmental movement. It is appropriate that you are coming to San Francisco to hear about our opposition to the expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling, especially the proposed expansion off our wonderful California coast.

As Legislators in the California State Legislature, we take our job of representing our constituents and serving as the stewards of our beautiful natural environment seriously. Undoubtedly, you have already been informed that our Governor, and the Governors of Oregon and Washington, oppose the expansion of drilling off the Pacific Coast. The State Legislature has also expressed its collective opposition to drilling in the past, and we do so again today with this letter. Our collective opposition to more drilling is reflected in several Assembly Joint Resolutions opposing offshore drilling that urge the U.S. Congress and Administration to retain the offshore drilling moratorium. These include Assembly Joint Resolution 51 in 2007 and Assembly Joint Resolution 3 this year.

Specifically, we are writing to express our opposition to the portion of the proposed Five-Year OCS plan that includes Northern, Central and Southern California planning areas for oil and gas drilling. New drilling in these planning areas is unacceptable. The potential risks in harming our coastal economy by opening these planning areas are far too great. We strongly urge you to remove these planning areas before the proposed Five-Year OCS plan is released.



The beaches, coast and ocean waters of California are irreplaceable resources and important sources of income and jobs for the state. One estimate of coastal tourism for the state puts it at \$90 billion per year providing employment for over 900,000 people. A Commerce Department report in 2001 put beach visitation days in 1999-2000 at 151 million days with a conservative value of \$7.5 billion in 2005 dollars. Recreational fishing in California coastal waters was valued at \$2.2 billion in 2006, providing almost 20,000 jobs. Commercial fishermen on California's coasts landed \$130 million worth of fish and shellfish in 2006 before accounting for processing and resale and at a time when the traditionally valuable salmon fishery was very depressed. We do not believe it is worth risking all these jobs and economic returns for the 8 billion barrels of oil that might lie off our coasts according to the estimates in the Proposed Five-Year OCS Plan.

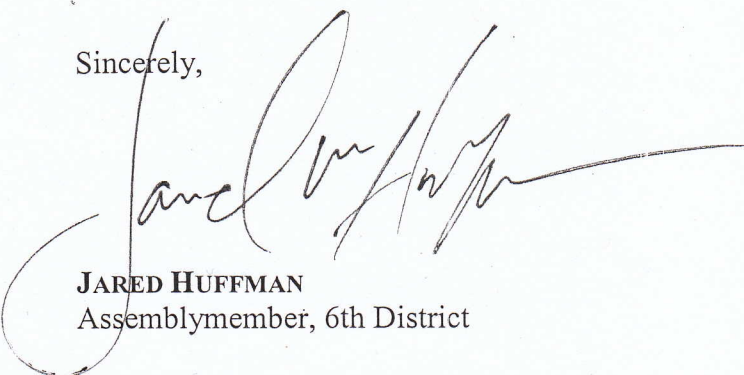
California's ocean waters are also home to four important sanctuaries: the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary that are, by definition, areas of special conservation, recreational and ecological importance and are particularly sensitive to the impacts of oil development. The state is also doing its own job of preserving oceans and marine life for future generations. We are in the process of designating a system of marine protected areas along the entire length of our 1,100 mile coastline that will total hundreds of square miles of state waters when completed.

California is already projected to suffer tens of billions of dollars in damage and will require more tens of billions of dollars to adapt to the impacts of global warming and sea level rise. We do not want to exacerbate that by producing yet more oil and gas that will contribute to the problem. Faced with these huge impacts from global warming, the state is doing more than its share to shift towards a clean energy future with programs for solar roofs, hybrid cars, renewable electricity, building conservation, mass transit and more. More drilling off our coast will send our citizens the wrong message about the urgency of making this shift.

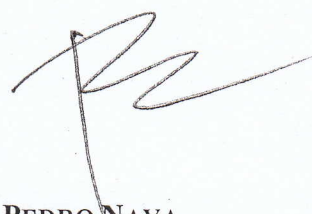
Mr. Secretary, to put our coastline, beaches, fishing, and our tourism economy at risk for minimal short-term economic benefits from oil and gas production is short-sighted and entirely unacceptable. We strongly urge you to remove all California planning areas from any oil and gas activities in the Five-Year proposed plan.

We thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



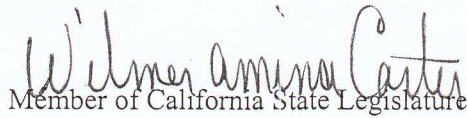
**JARED HUFFMAN**  
Assemblymember, 6th District



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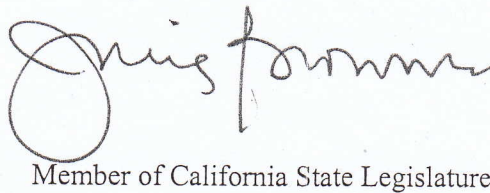
  
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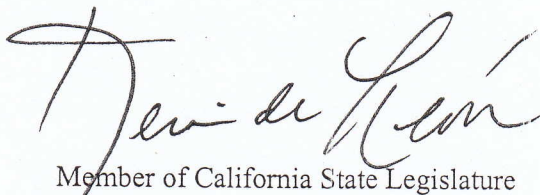
  
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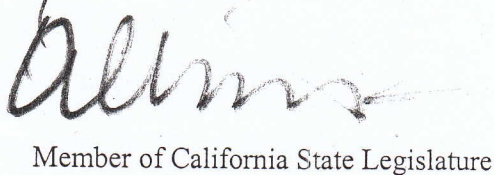
  
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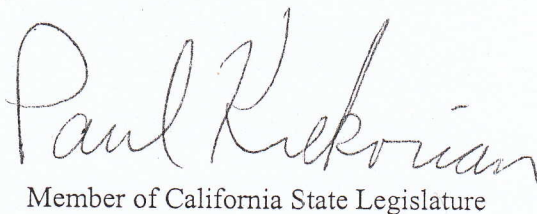
  
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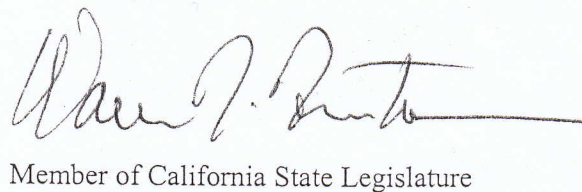
  
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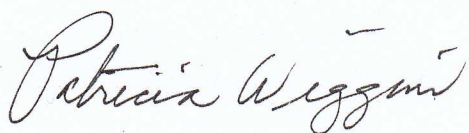
  
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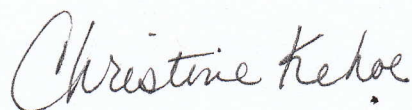
  
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